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AUTHOR Anwar, Mumtaz; And Others
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ABSTRACT

A proposal is made to use local people's libraries as information distribution centers for the Integrated Rural Development Program in Pakistan. The local libraries would function as centers for literacy programs, adult education, open university programs, instruction in improved farming methods, and general information dissemination. Each center would have a television set for either broadcast or videotaped educational programs, and would be staffed by a tutor-librarian. The people's libraries would be at the base of a National Information System (NATIS) hierarchy which would include Tehsil, district, and provincial libraries as well as the national library. A proposed budget, extracts from national educational policy statements, and materials on a library-based independent study program in Chicago are appended. (LS)

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INTEGRATED RURAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

A Preliminary Report on the Organization
of Libraries and Information Networks
in Pakistan

Prepared by the cooperative efforts of
United States-Pakistan Librarianship:
Dr. Mumtaz Anwar, Bashir Ali Khan
Donald Schabel, Nazar Tiwana

This draft Submitted to His Excellency
Mr. A. H. Pirzada, Minister for Education,
Pakistan Government

March 20, 1976

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

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PREFACE

This document represents an attempt to outline a plan for the organization and development of libraries in Pakistan in conjunction with the national education and information networks.

The national needs in terms of literacy, education and library services were evaluated and an effort has been made to outline goals and objectives in the light of latest research and knowledge in the United States. The report envisages a further step in the field of library services towards meeting the diverse and growing needs of the people in terms of literacy and flow of basic information. It is hoped that the report will also help to initiate the process of long term planning which is so vital in Pakistan where library development is still in the embryonic stage.

The authors are indebted to Mr. David L. Reich, Chief Librarian, Chicago Public Library, and the administration of the Punjab University in enabling the members of the team to spend the desired time in the compilation of the report, and are grateful to the Pakistan Ministry of Education for their help and cooperation.

The team is also highly indebted to His Excellency Mr. A. H. Pirzada for his initial encouragement and his sustained interest in the project which hopefully may lead to a successful implementation of this proposal through the joint efforts of the Pakistan Government and the United States AID program.

Last but not least, thanks are due to the typists in Lahore and Chicago that were responsible for a rushed but timely completion of the report.

INTRODUCTION

During the past 25 years the Pakistan government has developed and implemented various programs for improving economic and social conditions of rural life. Earlier schemes which began with the Village-Aid project in 1953 were confined to one or two aspects of rural life and worked independently of other developmental activities. Experience gained from these projects has led to the use of a "Total Approach" to solve the multiple problems of rural areas in the form of the Integrated Rural Development Program which was established in July, 1972. The basic idea of I.R.D. has been taken from the U. N. integrated approach and the "program is based on the philosophy that all aspects of rural life are inter-related and no lasting results could be achieved if individual aspects are dealt with in isolation".[1] This scheme visualizes to "integrate the functions of the Development Departments like Agriculture, Cooperatives, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Forestry, Social Welfare and Community Development, Health, Education, Electricity, Drainage, Reclamation, Small Industries, etc".[2]

One aspect of rural development that has never been given full attention is the public relations area. The development objectives have rarely been projected resulting in the lack of their understanding and acceptance by the rural population. The findings of a study of the Shadab Pilot Project support this contention. The study reports:[3]

> ...in our social set-up, sources of mass media communication like radio appeared to be ineffective in the diffusion of innovations, as there was not significant percentage of people who used radio as a source of information. This also indirectly shows a relative absence of the radio and transistor sets in the area of investigation, hence, not effective as a source of information.
>
> From the data it is also obvious that commercial sources of information are the least important in the diffusion of farm innovations. Formal (government) and informal sources like Field Assistant and fellow villagers respectively were the most important sources of information for all the five innovations....In short it can be safely argued that in our social set-up government agency sources and personalized communication channels are more effective than the mass media and commercial sources of communication (emphasis supplied).

The findings reported above need serious consideration. They indicate the need for the creation of a personalized communication system which provides a steady flow of pertinent information from relevant agencies to an interested group at one place. One such place in every community can become the hub of all activities aimed at improving the lot of rural population. If the information in-puts of all interested agencies are centralized in one unit this will definitely lead to a more effective I.R.D. Program. If a centralized information-providing agency is not established the I.R.D. edifice will be riddled with innumerable leakages leading to colossal national waste.

INTEGRATED RURAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

A study of the various schemes being implemented by the government (Integrated Rural Development, Health and Population Planning, Adult Education, People's Open University, People-Oriented Public Libraries, etc.) have led the authors of this report to develop a new approach in order to help achieve the development objectives of various programs. The scheme proposed in this report is essentially an extension of the People-Oriented Public Libraries program. It envisages bringing the adult education, educational television and People's Open University programs into the peoples library (extracts from The Education Policy, 1972-80 relating to these programs are given in Appendix 2). It also visualizes the peoples library to play a supportive role by providing means for updating information and continuing education.[4]

The idea of combining several services into one unit and providing supportive services to other development projects has taken the form of the new concept of Integrated Rural Information System (I.R.I.S.). The I.R.I.S. visualizes the development of an information centre (Peoples library) for a population of reasonable size to serve as the receiving end of all information inputs of various development programs and disseminating point of the information inputs received at the community level.

This unit will be the bottom tier of the National Information System (NATIS). The system when fully developed will consist of Peoples Provincial Libraries, Peoples District Libraries, Peoples Tehsil Libraries, and Peoples Libraries at the local level (both urban and rural). The national library will be at the top of the system and will also serve as a coordinating agency.

We understand a scheme for the development of a network of peoples libraries is being prepared by Dr. Anis Khurshid (University of Karachi) and Dr. Mumtaz A. Anwar (University of the Punjab) upon the initiative of the Pakistan Library Association.

SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED BY THE SYSTEM

Apart from being the Peoples Library, the local information centre will serve as a focal point for all information transfer programs offered by various government agencies. The separate channel for Educational Television as proposed in the Education Policy will be used for not only telecasting the adult education and

People's Open University programs but also for specific projects initiated by other agencies. Such projects may be used to motivate people to understand and accept the development objectives and to provide up-to-date information on various aspects of rural life.

The adult education and People's Open University programs will provide opportunities of formal education and will result in the award of certificates. Peoples Library will not only provide a supportive role but will also eliminate the need for independent staff, space and equipment for adult education and People's Open University programs.

This concept has already proved to be immensely successful in the United States. In Chicago a "TV College" has been operating for more than eighteen years. "TV College" has offered complete college courses to all television viewers in Chicago. Several years ago an ambitious project was begun with the Chicago Public Library and the "TV College" called "Study Unlimited". This program offers individuals the opportunity of completing college courses on their own time by utilizing videocassettes of course lectures. (A copy of a brochure for this programme is attached as Appendix 3.) Similar programs are in operation in several American cities. (An article describing these programs in detail is attached to this proposal as Appendix 4.)

Specific programs may be offered by development departments through Educational Television. For example, a series of one-hour programs might be developed on how to grow wheat or a particular crop. Similar programs could be developed by other departments. In order to encourage fruitful participation by people, such projects may be offered in the shape of formal education courses requiring enrolment, attendance, oral or written examination and award of some sort of certificates. Such programs are likely to result in better informed farmers/workers. In the long run these may also lead to a literate society.

The local centre will require a specific amount of space to house its facilities, a basic collection of reading materials, a television set, chairs and tables for users of these facilities. Each centre will be staffed by only one person—called Tutor-Librarian. A person who has passed a higher secondary school examination may be given six months training in the essentials of the adult education process, basic librarianship and how to operate a television set. It is estimated that one such rural centre will initially cost Rs. 38,000. Recurring expenditure for one centre will be about Rs. 5,000 (see Appendix 1). This expenditure can be slightly reduced by placing the post office in the centre and taking part of the staff salary from the postal department.

CENTRAL AGENCY

Since this project will be part of the National Information System, the establishment of these centres should be placed under the provincial departments of education. It will be logical to place these centres immediately under the Provincial Peoples Libraries when established. If no libraries function as such at the present time, the provincial Directorates of Libraries or such other agencies may be made responsible for the implementation of the project.

When the scheme is implemented all reading materials should be acquired and processed centrally and then sent to local libraries. This will be more economical and will ensure uniformity.

PILOT PROJECT

The proposed scheme may be implemented in the form of a pilot project. Initially one thousand villages having at least a primary school and falling in the area covered by the television service may be selected for the project. In order to ensure closer supervision at the initial stages the communities selected should be located near the provincial capitals.

Pilot Project may be started in January 1977. As a temporary measure the centre may be located in school buildings until the permanent facilities are built. Construction of centre halls may be taken up immediately so that the project is shifted to its own quarters by August 1977.

The details of development and recurring expenditure involved are given in appendix 1. The performance of the project may be evaluated after an initial operation of two years (January 1979). If the findings warrant any changes in the scheme these should be incorporated. The scheme should then be expanded to other rural areas by establishing two thousand centres each year. While expanding the scheme preference should be given to larger villages with schools.

If this scheme is implemented in the form of a pilot project agencies like USAID, Ford Foundation, Asia Foundation, etc., may be willing to support the program.

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2. Pakistan. Committee in Integrated Rural Development. Report. Islamabad: Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Underdeveloped Areas, 1972. p.3.

3. University of Agriculture, Lyallpur. Bench Mark Survey of Shadab Pilot Project. Islamabad: Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Rural Development, Govt. of Pakistan, 1973. pp. 73-74.

4. Pakistan. Ministry of Education. The Education Policy, 1972-1980. Islamabad: 1972. p. 29.

APPENDIX 1

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE FOR A TYPICAL RURAL INFORMATION CENTRE

a) Development expenditure	Rupees
1. Construction and Electrification of Centre Hall (24 feet x 36 feet)	20,000
2. Television set (one)	2,000
3. Tables and Chairs (6 Tables x Rs.300) (55 Chairs x Rs.40)	4,000
4. Book almirahs (5 x Rs.400)	2,000
5. Basic Book Collection	10,000
Total	38,000

b) Recurring expenditure	Rupees
1. Tutor-Librarian NPS 8(200-12-260/15-335/15-425)	3,720
2. Reading materials	1,000
3. Contingencies	200
Total:	4,920

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE FOR 1000 PILOT CENTRES

Developmental	38000 x	1000	=	3,80,00,000
Recurring	4,920 x	1000	=	49,20,000
		Total:		4,29,20,000

($1.00 U. S. = approximately 10 Pakistan rupees)

APPENDIX 2

Extracts from The Education Policy, 1972-1980, pp. 21,22,28,29.

ERADICATING ILLITERACY:

7.3. To achieve this objective of eradicating illiteracy, a massive literacy programme will be undertaken in every town and village. Literacy centres will be established all over the country in the schools, factories, farms, union council halls, and other community places. In addition to the use of traditional approaches in classrooms and workshops, extensive use will be made of new educational technology and non-conventional methods such as films, records, T.V., radio, libraries, exhibitions, seminars, demonstrations, charts, models, posters, pictures, and other suitable materials.

7.4. This massive literacy and adult education programme will first concentrate on basic literacy training and then expand and develop into a full-fledged, comprehensive adult and continuing education programme. For literacy training it is aimed, by 1980, to establish approximately 2.76 lakh literacy centres to provide training to more than 11 million illiterates.

PEOPLE'S OPEN UNIVERSITY

7.10. Open universities are being used in several countries to provide education and training to people who cannot leave their homes and jobs for full-time studies. A People's Open University will, therefore, be established to provide part-time educational facilities through correspondence courses, tutorials, seminars, workshops, laboratories, television, radio broadcasts, and other mass communication media. To begin with, this university will provide facilities in fields and subjects of immediate importance such as the training of elementary teachers and members of the National Literacy Corps, and the promotion of rural improvement and community development activities.

LIBRARIES:

10.11. In addition, a Public Library System will be established throughout the country. Under this programme, 50,000 people-oriented libraries will be established in villages and city wards. They will contain, inter-alia, about a hundred basic booklets with limited vocabulary designed as an encyclopedia of information for every day living. People's handbooks will also be prepared, published and supplied to each Adult and Continuing Education Centre.

USE OF RADIO AND TELEVISION:

10.14. In order to promote educational broadcasting programmes a massive distribution of radio and television sets will be undertaken, both to formal and non-formal education centres. By 1980, about 150,000 radio and 100,000 television sets will be distributed to schools and adult/continuing education centres. These sets will also be used for community-viewing programmes in agricultural extension, health education, family planning and social reconstruction.

10.15. Separate radio and television channels will be established for broadcasting educational programmes to schools and adult literacy centres.

PEOPLE'S OPEN UNIVERSITY:

10.19. People's Open University referred to in Section 7.10 of the chapter on Adult Education will provide part-time education through the use of mass media and modern instructional techniques.

APPENDIX 3

STUDY UNLIMITED

What is Study Unlimited?

Study Unlimited is an educational breakthrough, a cooperative venture of The Chicago Public Library and the City Colleges of Chicago. It provides an opportunity for anyone who wants to start-or continue—college level studies to do so. It also makes materials available if you want to earn a high school equivalency certificate by passing the General Educational Development test (GED) or prepare for the College Level Examination Program (CLEP). And it lets you do any of these things independently, at your own pace, on your own time.

How does it work?

Study Unlimited service has been established at The Chicago Public Library's Temporary Central Library and in several branches, as well as at City College locations. These locations provide fully credited college courses on videocassettes and audiocassettes. They are stocked with study materials—books, videocassettes, audiocassettes, records and study guides. Courses can be taken for credit or simply for enjoyment.

What are the study options in Study Unlimited?

Credit: Students do homework, take tests and upon passing receive credit which is transferrable or applicable to an associate degree.

GED: Students use materials to prepare for the General Educational Development test to receive the high school equivalency certificate. Some GED students will also be preparing for the Constitution test which is required to get a diploma in Illinois.

CLEP: Students utilize materials from a variety of courses to prepare for the credit exemption tests. Up to 24 credit hours can be earned.

Audit: Students are taking a course for credit elsewhere, frequently through TV College and use Study Unlimited materials for supplement and review.

Personal Enrichment: Learners use the Study Unlimited materials to increase their understanding of a subject. If they wish, they may follow the study guide.

How long does it take to finish a course?

From date of enrollment you have nine months to finish a credit course, one year for personal enrichment.

How do you work out your individual study plan?

One of the valuable experiences in Study Unlimited is learning to plan your own program with the aid of the Study Unlimited counselor. Each Study Unlimited Library location has a counselor to help you devise a study plan, whether for credit courses, GED or CLEP study or for self-enrichment. At any of the City Colleges of Chicago's seven campuses, you may also receive guidance counseling or financial aid information. There is also telephone access to your instructor.

How do you enroll?

You simply enroll at the library offering Study Unlimited nearest your home or job. Come to one of the locations listed and tell the librarian what you have in mind.

What does it cost?

Credit students pay the regular tuition charged by the City Colleges of Chicago, three dollars per credit hour for five or fewer credits, four dollars per credit hour for six or more credits. Learners using the other study options pay nothing unless they want their own study guide, which costs one dollar.

The following agencies offer Study Unlimited:

Libraries

The Chicago Public Library
Study Unlimited Office
425 N. Michigan Avenue
269-2812

Temporary Central Library
425 N. Michigan #1205
269-3000

Northtown Branch Library
6435 N. California Ave.
465-8851

Portage-Cragin Branch Library
5108 W. Belmont Ave.
736-2675

Legler Regional Branch Library
115 S. Pulaski Road
533-9631

Whitney M. Young Branch Library
7901 S. King Drive
723-4029

Carter G. Woodson Regional Library
9525 S. Halsted
881-6900

Campuses

The City Colleges of Chicago
Study Unlimited Office
185 N. Wabash Avenue
269-8210

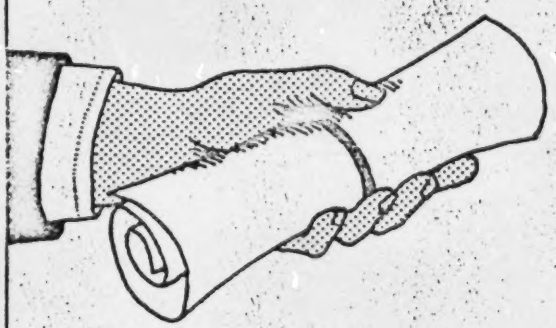
Malcolm X College
1900 W. VanBuren Street
942-3521

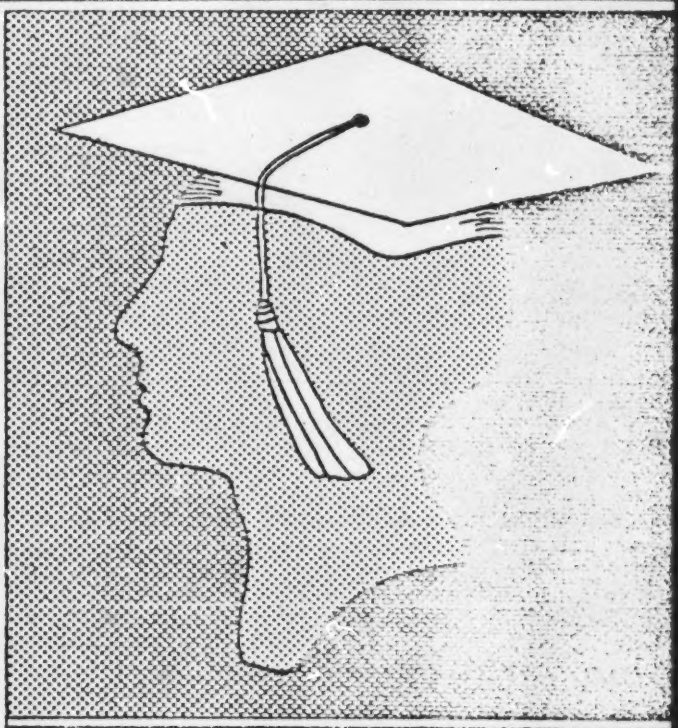
Southwest College
7500 S. Pulaski Road
735-3000

STUDY UNLIMITED

OPTIONS:

Credit Courses
GED(Materials)
CLEP(Materials)
Personal Enrichment Courses
Audit Courses





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AMERICAN EDUCATION, JANUARY/FEBRUARY, 1976, pp. 6-10

YOUR LIBRARY

A College Around the Corner

By Eleanor Touhey Smith

Reviving an old idea, some libraries are now helping independent adult learners study what they choose and for whatever reason

Recently at a meeting of librarians in New York City, Roy Miller, the coordinator of Adult Services at the Brooklyn Public Library, made a statement rife with promise for thousands of people across the country. "There is a public out there," he said, "that wants something we haven't given them until now." He was talking about his library's "Learn *Your* Way" Center, a project designed to encourage and assist individuals to study on their own. In the project, which has been in operation since June 1975, Learners Advisers—librarians with special training in helping an individual identify and define his or her learning needs—are busy assisting anyone over 16 years old who wants to learn anything for virtually any reason.

Among the more than 300 learners who have registered so far for the program at Brooklyn's central library and at two branches are some who want to prepare for college level examinations (CLEP) or need to study to take the tests for the high school equivalency diploma (GED). Others are interested in the External Degree program instituted by Ewald Nyquist, New York State's Commissioner of Education, and want help in working toward a degree without attending college. A significant number are unemployed and want to use their free time to study for a new career or to sharpen skills they already have. Some of the senior citizens in the program are interested in activating a second remunerative career or in developing a hobby they never had time to concentrate on before. Others—and there are many in this group—for reasons of their own are just interested in learning more about some subject, or in studying a language, or developing skill in some craft.

The Brooklyn Library is not alone in entering, on a more or less structured basis, into the arena of nontraditional education, previously considered the prerogative of schools and colleges. Other public libraries in various parts of the country, either on their own or with some Federal assistance, are also engaged in advancing this new user-oriented library service. Librarians have always played a part in continuing education, but now their aim is to expand the library's traditional role from supplier of adult education materials and information about available courses to operator of a community center for independent lifelong learning. One Learners Adviser neatly sums up the whole effort: "The public library can literally become a college around the corner in your neighborhood."

Chief catalyst, and according to some critics, the leading boat-rocker in this current library movement is Jose Orlando Toro of the College Entrance Examination Board, which administers CLEP. A professional librarian himself, Mr. Toro long ago had the idea that the public library could be not only a place but in fact *the best* place to promote the CLEP concept of credit by examination. He saw the library as the logical provider of all kinds of information and study help to thousands of adults wanting to seek knowledge independently for the sake of learning.

A historical precedent for this idea goes back to shortly after the first World War, when librarian Jennie Flexner started a helping service for independent adult learners in the New York Public Library. Through the 1920s and 1930s many other libraries followed her example with programs carried out with reader's advisers. However, the service declined in the 1940s and 1950s, and most library adult-services specialists, when discussing reader guidance in the last decade, have insisted that it would take a new focus and an infusion of special funds to make reader's advisory service a distinct and effective program once more.

Mr. Toro, some years ago, revived the idea with a suggestion that the independent learner deserved special library attention. Several public library directors, including those in Dallas, Miami, San Diego, and St. Louis, agreed to go as far as to publicize CLEP. The commitment at Dallas actually went further when the Dallas Public Library set up an experimental project to promote CLEP, starting in August of 1971. Southern Methodist University, which is located in Dallas, agreed to grant credits to anyone passing CLEP tests. Other schools in the area were soon doing the same. During the two-year period, SMU professors prepared study guides and reading lists which were distributed to approximately 8,000 library users. There were also workshops on ways to study and ways to use the library and question-and-answer sessions on the subjects studied.

The Dallas project was considered by some observers to be "a benchmark for library activities in independent learning," but Jean Brooks and David Reich, who evaluated and reported on the project, were frank in describing both its successes and limitations. They mentioned that although many participants were satisfied with the library's service and said so, it was difficult to evaluate the project's impact on the community because information was limited to what was supplied by those persons willing to fill out postcards or to make comments in the library. It was good to hear that a man who had worked since high school to educate his brothers and sisters was finally able, thanks to the project, to embark on his own higher education. Or that a housewife with two small children no longer felt "stuck" at home now that she was involved in independent study. But the library would have liked to have heard from many more of the individuals who took the study guides but remained silent.

The hard data at the end of the two years consisted of a mailing list of 2,300 interested people, including 103 who actually took CLEP tests. One reviewer of the Brooks and Reich study concluded that the project was worth doing because "achievement was measured in terms of progress and adaptability, rather than in solid end results. In terms of these goals, the Dallas project was successful beyond all reasonable hope." At the present time, the Dallas library still maintains its service for independent learners in cooperation with other educational institutions as part of its regular library program.

About the time the Dallas project was winding down, Mr. Toro was activating an Office of Library Independent Study and Guidance at the College Entrance Examination Board with grants from the Council on Library Resources, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and OE's Office of Libraries and Learning Resources. Working with 11 public libraries that were willing to commit their own resources to implement projects aimed at people interested in various kinds of independent study, Mr. Toro launched a "Learners Advisory" program in 1973. His office provided the training for librarian

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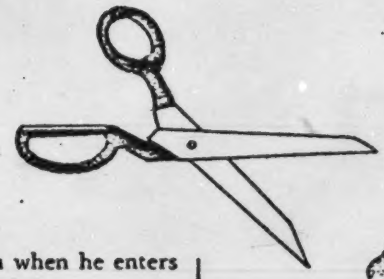
Mrs. Smith is a consultant on adult education and recently retired as Library Services Program Officer for Region II, U.S. Office of Education.



involved and publicity for the programs. By the fall of 1975, nine of the 11 libraries (Atlanta; The Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore; Denver; Miami; Portland, Maine; St. Louis; Salt Lake City; Tulsa; and Woodbridge, New Jersey) had completed planning, staff training, and demonstration projects, and offered the full service for independent study.

There are two main components of the program: advisory assistance, which is concerned with the diagnosis of an individual's learning needs and the development of a learning plan to meet the needs; and information support services, which attends to selection of materials (print and nonprint), the use of study guides, and referral to other agencies, if appropriate, or to learning events such as group discussions and field trips.

Libraries working in the Learners Advisory Service have helped individuals with virtually every conceivable interest and in every conceivable situation. For example, Lenore Lewis, Learners Adviser at the Salt Lake City Public Library, helped a woman put a casual hobby to practical use. The hobby was making paper dolls, and the woman decided to design a set of them in booklet form, representing each decade of our history since 1776. Ms. Lewis helped her find books on the history of paper dolls, the proper costume details for each of the periods, and important historical events related to the particular years she chose to illustrate. The woman and her husband have printed the booklet on their own printing press and are using library directories to explore marketing possibilities.

From the Miami-Dade Public Library's Learners Adviser, Micki Carden, comes a report on the progress of a 20-year-old high school dropout who came to the library for information on how to obtain his diploma. Ms. Carden first advised him on reading and on how to use the library. Then she supplied him with books about American history and government on the junior high level to prepare him for tests in lieu of two courses that normally precede high school equivalency. He took the tests and passed with high scores. He went on to receive his high school diploma, obtained a job, and is now studying for the CLEP exams. He still confers regularly with the Learners Adviser program people for reading guidance to help him when he enters college on a part-time schedule.

From the Tulsa City-County Library, Learners Adviser Paige Graening reports a success story that is verified by the independent learner's "severest" critic, his wife. Mr. Case, (not his real name), a shy, middle-aged man, asked for help in studying for a GED test. He could not attend classes because he worked nights. He was invited to come to the library every morning to study. Over a two-week period he took the GED diagnostic test which pinpointed those areas in which he needed the most preparation. Within six weeks of Mr. Case's first library visit, Mrs. Case reported that he had passed his GED exams, was now a high school graduate, and was enrolling at Tulsa Junior College. A few weeks later, Mrs. Case came to the library to tell Paige Graening that her husband was making A's and B's in his classes and participating in classroom discussion. She added, "Until he started studying for the GED, he had been a custodian with an eighth-grade education."

In Maine, a retired man (call him George) interested in gems and minerals asked Edgar Beem at the Portland Public Library's Community Center for Lifelong Learning (the name for their Learners Advisory Service) for help in learning how to make jewelry. He was especially interested in setting stones and in working with silver, so Mr. Beem found a book on silver casting and then called some local jewelers and craftsmen to find out where George might get some practical instruction. A young silversmith volunteered to work with him. Meanwhile, George's wife, Ethel, asked Mr. Beem for help in learning conversational French because their gem hunting expeditions often took them to Quebec. Mr. Beem supplied her with French language records, a record player, and a copy of a book on conversational French. Now both George and Ethel are studying French.

The Office of Independent Study at the College Entrance Examination Board has statistics on the projects, but in addition, a statistical analysis of Portland's project was made in the fall of 1975 by Joseph Hearn of the University of Maine at Portland-Gorham. Dr. Hearn notes that among more than 100 adults served since the Learners Advisers Service was started in the

fall of 1974, 40 were still engaged in independent learning projects ranging from yacht design and boat building to interior decoration and hang gliding.

Last October, Mr. Toro announced that each of the libraries participating in the project had decided to make Learners Advisory Service an integral part of their regular offerings. He also said that, with the conclusion of the pilot project and subsequent termination of his leadership role, a network composed of the nine libraries involved will take over. Plans are now developing to divide leadership responsibility among a policy study group, a research study group, and a national resource faculty. Mr. Toro expressed the hope that other public libraries now offering independent learner programs or planning to offer them will join with these groups to help develop a national network.

While a national network remains in the "desirable but as yet unaccomplished" category, New York, with the cooperation of Mr. Toro and under the leadership of the State Library's Division of Library Development, developed the Nation's first statewide library program for independent study. The concept was introduced at a conference held at Syracuse University's Sagamore Conference Center in 1973 and attended by representatives of the State's 22 public library systems. There was a good deal of interest in planning the service, especially since it was made clear that it could be developed entirely according to the needs of each community and within the resources of each library system.

Currently, all but one of the State's library systems are involved in the program to some extent, participation being encouraged by the State Library agency through grants under the Library Services and Construction Act to each system offering planned programs of help to independent learners. These grants, which are renewable, may be used to pay salaries of part-time librarians who are employed to carry on the tasks of the regular staff members serving as Learners Advisers. They are also used to purchase books and other materials needed for the External Degree program, other credit and noncredit courses, or completely independent study.

New York State's program started with training sessions which Mr. Toro planned for key staff members representing the public library systems of Brooklyn, Nassau, New York City, Queens Borough, Suffolk, and Westchester. (These were followed by similar meetings for library systems in other parts of the State.) All six systems are using the phrase, "Learn *Your* Way" to identify the service. The New York Public Library issued a special Learners Advisory Service Newsletter in June of 1975 explaining the program to all its staff, and it began the service in September in five selected branches. The first month, 19 of 81 persons interviewed expressed a need for continuing assistance from the Learners Adviser. Their interests were similar to those expressed by Brooklyn's independent learners, and the number of queries from unemployed persons often resulted in referral to the job information service at the Mid-Manhattan Library Center. This also happened in the case of the Brooklyn Library and augurs a growing relationship between the two services in other libraries in the State which have received grants in the past year to offer information about job opportunities in their communities.

Member libraries of the Nassau system are developing their Learn *Your* Way programs in cooperation with other educational institutions in the area. Directors of a number of different programs described activities which could be tied in with a library's independent learner program. Some examples: Regents External Degree Program at the University of the State of New York; Career Advisement Center, University College, Hofstra; Channel 21, Long Island Television Council, Inc.; and the Office of Community Education of the Nassau County Vocational Education and Extension Board. At the present time, more than a dozen of the Nassau public libraries are serving as classrooms for courses at both the Bachelor's and Master's level for several area colleges; some are handling registration for many off-campus courses that are held in other community buildings.

New York libraries are not alone in jumping off to a fast start in the effort to cooperate with other institutions. Through an independent study program called "Study Unlimited," the Chicago Public Library aims at serving Chicagoans of all ethnic groups and levels of education who want an education with or without the goal

of a college degree. It is a cooperative program supported by the Illinois State Library under the Library Services and Construction Act, by the Illinois Junior College Board for the City Colleges of Chicago, and by the Chicago Public Library.

Five study centers are in operation, including one at the Cook County Correctional Facility. Each center offers a learning environment stocked with materials in print or on audio and video cassette. Library Learners Advisers assist in the use of the media, and students who so desire can get guidance from college faculty for course and career changes. Each person constructs his or her own route toward higher education, for college credit or not, and progress is achieved at the student's own pace. In the spring of 1975, more than 200 students were enrolled at the centers—these in addition to 133 who had registered the previous fall and were continuing their independent study.

Possibly as a result of publicity given Learners Advisers projects in the library press, library educators are now getting into the act. At Sangamon State University in Illinois, assistant professor Florence Lewis has been awarded a fellowship from the State Library under the Library Services and Construction Act to study the relationship between libraries and adult learners involved in independent study preparatory to passing accrediting examinations. With funds under Title II-B of the Higher Education Act, Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Library and Information Science is planning an Institute for Library Managers for extended consideration and exploration of the role of the librarian in facilitating the independent learning projects of clients. Immaculate Heart College in California proposes, also with an HEA Title II-B grant, to use a college library as a community center and coordinating agency for a prototype tutorial program to prepare adults for CLEP examinations. And the University of Southern California's School of Library Science recently announced that it is offering an independent study program leading to a degree in librarianship. Called "A Library School Educational Program Without Walls" and funded by OE, the program "will allow the students to study and learn, in flexible time units, at a location and at a time suitable to them."

In spite of the enthusiasm of those involved in library independent study programs and the testimonials from satisfied clients, the service is not without its critics. Some see it as an expensive up-date of the traditional readers advisory service, which is no longer needed. A few observers have asserted that it is only offering better library service to the middle class, which has always been served well, and that it could mean the curtailment of information and cultural programs in disadvantaged neighborhoods which, until the coming of Federal aid, were poorly served. Others have noted that serving the independent learner requires a lot of staff time and that libraries with austere budgets cannot afford to release staff members for Learners Adviser duties. There are also such questions as: What will happen when colleges, trying to get more full-time students, see the public library offering free or relatively inexpensive continuing education?

Regardless of what impact this new pursuit may have upon other kinds of library services, or upon programs of other educational institutions—and it is too soon to note any—it surely is helping the individual who is seriously interested in learning on his own. It should also result in an improved image of libraries and librarians, one that would make more people feel less uncomfortable in asking a librarian for help. And, of course, it is bound to entangle librarians and those in the academic world in philosophical discussion about traditional versus alternative methods of education.

Malcolm Knowles, a distinguished adult educator and library watcher over the years, recently came out squarely in favor of librarians' involvement in independent study. Said Dr. Knowles: "The new emphasis on nontraditional study will reconstitute the library as the people's university, with librarians replacing teachers and serving as resource managers and learning consultants. I foresee the time when there won't be adult educators as we know them. We adult educators will all be more like librarians. I perceive the time when the difference between our two professions will disappear; there won't be a graduate school of library science and graduate program of adult higher education. But there will be a learning consultant profession, or something of that sort."

Maybe that is what the library Learners Advisers have in mind when they exhort the American public to "Learn YOUR Way!" □

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Readers wanting more information should write to State and Public Library Services Branch, Office of Libraries and Learning Resources, U.S. Office of Education, Washington, DC 20202.